

KING ALBERT TELLS
HOW LITTLE BELGIUM
ARMY HAS FOUGHT IN
COUNTRY'S DEFENSE

In Lengthy Interview Belgium's Ruler Graphically Describes His Country's Bravery and Sacrifice

DEEPLY TOUCHED BY
SUPERB GENEROSITY
OF AMERICAN PEOPLE

"I Believe My People Are Courageous," He Says, and Some Day I Shall Ride Into Brussels at the Head of a Belgian Army"

Grand Headquarters of the King of the Belgians in West Flanders, Belgium, Sunday, December 20.—(Via London, December 23, 5:10 p. m.)—In the council chamber of an ancient Flemish town hall from which he is directing, under German shell fire, the resistance of his war-worn little army blocking the road to Dunkirk and Calais, King Albert of the Belgians today told the Associated Press correspondent of the stand his soldiers are making against the German invaders. The King's headquarters is located on one corner of Belgium still under his rule.

King Albert also requested the Associated Press to convey to the people of the United States his deep gratitude for their efforts to feed his subjects under German military rule.

The monarch was alone when the correspondent was admitted to the council chamber. He wore the simple undress uniform of a general of artillery without insignia, beyond braided shoulder stripes, to distinguish him from a staff officer.

Physically, King Albert looks hardened, but lines of care show in his otherwise youthful face. In manner, he is decidedly shy, and he apologized for his English, which, however, was fluent.

The light from a smoky oil lamp barely penetrated the recesses of the great hall, where from the walls empty picture frames stared down.

When the King saw the eyes of the correspondent fixed on these blank spaces, where a few months ago invaluable Flemish canvases hung, he smiled and said he no longer expected the Germans to even be in a position to take the frames.

Praises Courage of Troops

Modestly he praised the courage of his soldiers.

"I believe," he said, "my army is courageous. My people, however, are democratic for the same discipline that prevails in conscript armies. You will see something of the bravery of my people when tomorrow you shall have the chance to witness the peasants working in their fields under shell fire, concerned only for the losses of their homes, the destruction of which causes them great grief."

When Edgar Senger, Belgian attaché to the American commission for the relief of Belgium, entered and presented King Albert with a report from the commission showing that enough food was in sight to feed his people until February 12, the King turned quickly to the correspondent, saying:

"Will you be kind enough to convey to the American people my deep gratitude?"

He then wrote in English the following message:

"The magnificent generosity of the American people in forwarding immense quantities of gifts of foodstuffs to my suffering people affords me intense satisfaction and touches me very deeply.

"In this, my country's hour of trial, nothing has supported me more than the sympathy and the superb generosity of those who have assisted in materially lessening the same, and I desire to offer my deepest thanks and at the same time convey a message of good will for the new year.

ALBERT.
"King of the Belgians."

Facts of the Story

King Albert was anxious to have the American people know, as he put it, the facts of the story of how his troops, demoralized and disorganized by their heartening retreat almost across the limits of their own country, turned at bay along the Yser and held back the Germans there at frightful cost in killed and wounded to their army, and of the almost incalculable loss suffered in the deliberate inundation by its owners of the most valuable agricultural part of the country.

"In one of those terrible nine days in the trenches along the Yser," the King

(Continued on Page Two)

SEVERAL DROWNED
AND THOUSANDS IN
PROPERTY LOST AS A
RESULT OF FLOODS

Southern Arizona Swept By Serious Floods Following Week of Continuous Rainfall

DOZENS OF RANCH
DWELLINGS HAVE
BEEN SWEEPED AWAY

\$500,000 Plant Destroyed at Tucson—Vera Cruz Valley Region Suffers Especially Heavy Damage to Property

Tucson, Ariz., December 23.—Floods resulting from a week of practically unbroken rainfall have inflicted severe damage on nearly the entire area between Phoenix and the Mexican border. Three persons are known to have lost their lives; hundreds of head of live stock have been drowned; ranch houses and city residences have been wrecked or washed away by torrents roaring through what usually are dry canyons, and traffic by rail, highway and wire either have been crippled or completely suspended.

The most serious damage seems to have resulted in that part of the Santa Cruz valley lying 30 miles south of here. The Santa Cruz river attained a width of more than a mile and a half today, and the crust of the flood, after sweeping through Amado and the surrounding farming region, reached Tucson tonight sweeping out bridges and houses and threatening to work further destruction.

Dozens of ranch dwellings were destroyed in the vicinity of Amado. Two Mexicans were drowned there, after they had hung in the branches of trees for hours awaiting rescue. A United States soldier was reported to have been drowned in a big washout at Naco. Machinery costing \$500,000 belonging to the Tucson Farms company project, went under water today.

At Bisbee floods poured through the deep canyons and inundated portions of the business section. A three-foot layer of sand was deposited upon the main streets by the flood, which receded almost as rapidly as it came.

Nogales, Fort Huachuca, Florence and Ray remained isolated tonight. Near Phoenix the Salt River valley irrigation project, with its extensive and costly canal system, has suffered severely.

A Southern Pacific train on the line between Tucson and Nogales was marooned by washouts of track on both sides of it. A relief train was sent out late today to rescue the passengers.

Detachments of National guardsmen were dispatched tonight to aid flood sufferers and guard threatened points.

Main line traffic on the Southern Pacific was stopped tonight when the Rio Hilo river culvert, nine miles west of here, was washed out.

Passengers on a stalled train 50 miles west of here were without food for 24 hours. Then they made their way to neighboring ranches.

National Guardsmen tried unsuccessfully to swim their horses across three miles of water at Sahuarita, 19 miles south of here, to reach a house where a family was telephoning for help.

EMPEROR TRAVELS
IN ARMORED TRAIN

London, December 24.—(5:56 a. m.)—Emperor William is traveling in an armored special train among his troops scattered along the Belgian and French front, delivering to them the season's greetings, according to a Daily Express frontier correspondent.

"The train," the correspondent says, "makes stops at all important points. Of course it is not announced where he will spend Christmas day, but he will be close to the front and a Christmas message from him will be delivered to each soldier through the general staff."

"Christmas will be celebrated in the German trenches as far as possible. There will be plentiful feasts, many gifts from home and many small Christmas trees in most of the underground shelters, camps and hospitals and even on board the troop trains."

TODAY'S AGE-HERALD

1—King Albert tells of war activities. Country on verge of prosperity. Terrific fighting continues. Peace centenary today.

2—Dates' action a surprise.

3—Southern cities growing rapidly.

4—Editorial comment.

5—Thinks Birmingham hurt by decision.

6—L. and N. plans shops at Boyles.

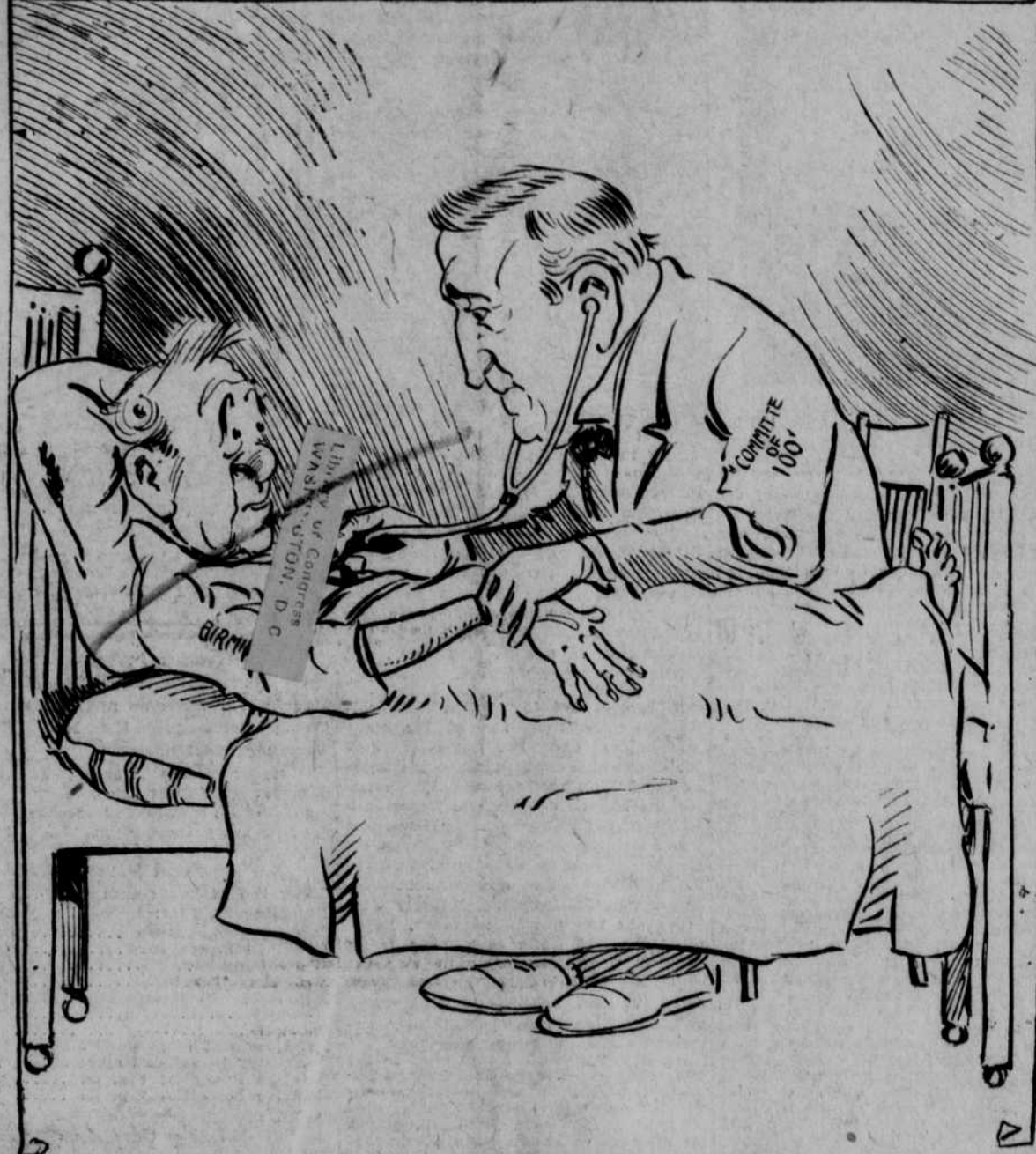
7—Not yet decided on committees.

8—Business situation in Germany better.

9—Markets.

10—Fighting in France is not all tragedy, writes officer.

THE NEW DOCTOR ON THE CASE

Europe Has Placed Over \$300,000,000
In Contracts In U. S. Since War Began

As Result of This Buying the United States Is Now At the Threshold of the "Greatest Period of Prosperity It Has Seen In Many Years," Declares Charles M. Schwab, on Return From Visit to Europe

New York, December 23.—European nations have placed contracts in the United States for more than \$300,000,000 worth of supplies since the beginning of the war, according to Charles M. Schwab, president of the Bethlehem Steel corporation, who returned from England today on the Lusitania. Mr. Schwab declared that as a result of this buying the United States now was at the threshold of "greatest period of prosperity it has seen in many years."

Mr. Schwab went to England to cancel provisional contracts he had made with the British government for the building of submarines. He did this, he said today, after having been advised by Secretary Bryan that for an American concern to supply submarines to any of the belligerent nations would be a violation of neutrality. The contracts given up, he said, were worth more than \$15,000,000, but he was able to secure others while abroad for the supply of various munitions of war. He declined to say with what nation they had been negotiated.

"The next big problem," the United States will have to face," said Mr. Schwab, "will be development of transportation facilities to handle tremendous increases in manufacturing and commercial enterprises."

"The period of prosperity that I predicted on my last return from Europe is about on us. The contracts placed with American manufacturing concerns by Europe call for delivery within the year, and I look to see a big revival of business in every line."

Mr. Schwab, on his previous trip, was a passenger on the steamship Olympic when that ship went to the rescue of the dreadnaught Audacious. He declined then to confirm or deny the incident, pleading that he was honor bound not to speak of it.

Asked today if the Audacious did go down, his reply was: "It certainly did."

Missouri Contracts

Kansas City, Mo., December 23.—Figures announced today by the Commercial club show that \$5,000,000 worth of horses and mules have been marketed through Kansas City to the British government. One manufacturer alone has supplied to the same market half a million pairs of shoes for soldiers. The exports of 27,000 barrels this year, compared with 75,000 barrels last year.

THE WAR SITUATION

FRANCE

Paris, December 23.—(10:40 p. m.)—The following official communication was issued tonight:

"The progress made through our attacks between the Meuse and the forest of the Argonne has been almost entirely maintained. According to the latest news our front in this region has reached the barbed wire entanglements of the enemy at the salient angle southwest of the wood of Forgey (east of Ouisy) and lined the road leading to the forest of Bourguilles.

"There is no other notable incident to report."

GERMANY

Berlin, December 23.—(By Wireless to Sayville.)—Items given out today by the official press bureau include:

"So far as can be determined from available reports the situation has not altered materially on either front in the last 24 hours.

"Heavy fighting is proceeding along the Bzura river, where one may assume the Russian position is extremely strong. The Russian right apparently rests on the Vistula, affording it protection from flank attacks; in the rear are Nowo Geoglewsk and the Warsaw fortresses. The fact that the Germans crossed the Bzura and Rawa rivers should render their task easier."

ATLANTA RESERVE BANK RATES TO BE FURTHER REDUCED

New Rates Are 5 Per Cent On All Maturities to and Including Those of Thirty Days and 5½ Per Cent On All Longer Maturities

Atlanta, December 23.—Further reductions in the discount rates of the federal reserve bank for the sixth district here were announced tonight by Governor McCord.

The new rates effective December 23, are 5 per cent on all maturities to and including those of 60 days, 5½ per cent on maturities over 60 days, and including those of 90 days, and 6 per cent on all longer maturities.

The rates now in effect are 5 per cent to and including 30-day maturities, 5½ per cent to and including 60-day maturities, and 6 per cent on all other maturities.

Richmond, December 23.—Governor Seay of the Fifth district federal reserve bank here, announced tonight that, effective December 23, the rediscount rates of the Richmond bank would be the same as the new rates of the Atlanta bank. These provide for a reduction of one-half of one per cent on charges for 30 and 60 to 90-day maturities.

J. W. Harrison Resigns

Montgomery, December 23.—(Special.)—J. W. Harrison of Montgomery, first lieutenant of the signal corps of the Alabama National guard, today tendered his resignation to Adj. Gen. Joseph H. Schuyler. A special election will be called in the next few days for the selection of Mr. Harrison's successor.

TERRIFIC FIGHTING
CONTINUES ON BOTH
GERMAN FRONTIERS;
CASUALTIES HEAVY

Anglo-French and Russians Both Take Offensive, But Advances are Almost Imperceptible

GERMANS SUCCESSFUL
IN FORCING RUSSIANS
FROM BEFORE CRACOW

Effort to Pierce the Russian Front Is Repulsed—Russia Resumes Offensive In Galicia and Claims Minor Successes

Rome, December 23.—(4:50 p. m.) A rumor is in circulation here that Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria-Hungary is dying. The report has it that the Emperor has received the last sacraments.

London, December 23.—(2:15 p. m.)

The allies in the west, the Germans in Poland and the Russians in East Prussia and Galicia continue offensive operations, but the advances have been so slight as to be almost imperceptible. In the long run, however, the ground gained may prove vital and the various armies are fighting with an intensity not exceeded since the war began.

In Poland the center of interest has shifted slightly to the south. Finding the direct road to Warsaw blocked by Russian reinforcements, the Germans made an attack from the southwest and have reached Skierniewice some 40 miles from the Polish capital. They thus far have failed to pierce the Russian lines, but have forced Grand Duke Nicholas to withdraw from before Cracow. In this, one of the chief aims of their offensive against Russia, the Germans have been successful.

In Galicia, Russia has resumed the offensive against the Austro-German forces which have poured in from the west and across the Carpathians. According to the latest Petrograd report, the Russians have inflicted heavy losses on these forces, while in the north they have pursued back into the interior of East Prussia, a small German army which made a feint at Warsaw from the northwest.

Score Some Successes

Although the allies have scored some successes in the west, they are meeting with stubborn resistance and military men warn the public that very heavy casualty lists must be expected before any serious impression can be made on the German entrenchments.

Activity seems to have been resumed also on the Belgian coast, for it is announced that the allies have made slight progress between the sea and the road from Nieuport to Westende. At other points similar fighting is proceeding with great success and there reverse or failure of attack.

Airmen on both sides have been busy and aeroplanes have been swarming over Belgium, the fliers reconnoitering movements of the opposing troops and occasionally dropping bombs. Bruges and Brussels have been visited by aviators from the ranks of the allies, while Brest and other towns in northern France have received attention from the Germans.

PRESIDENT WILL
PLAY SANTA CLAUS

Christmas Tree Delivered at White House—Day Will Be Generally Observed

Washington, December 23.—President Wilson will play "Santa Claus" Christmas day for his small grand-niece, Annie Cuthbert. A large Christmas tree was delivered today at the White House. The President, with his three daughters, Mrs. F. B. Sayre, Mrs. W. G. McAdoo and Miss Margaret Wilson, and other relatives plan to go to Church Christmas morning. He will attend only to absolutely necessary business during the day.

PAY \$1000 TO
DEPORT LEPER

St. Louis, December 23.—Arastios Loizos, a Greek leper recently found here, was taken to New York for deportation at an expense of \$1000 to the United States immigration bureau, it became known today.

A special car was engaged at a cost of \$500 and permission was obtained from the board of health of each state between St. Louis and New York through which the railroad runs. A government revenue cutter carried the leper to a steamer.

LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE
TO REOPEN JANUARY 4

Conduct of Business Will Be Under Strict Regulations Imposed by Treasury—Dealings Except for Cash Will Be Prohibited

London, December 23.—(3:10 p. m.)—It was officially announced tonight that the London stock exchange will reopen January 4. The conduct of business, however, will be restricted by stringent regulations imposed by the treasury in the interest of the nation. The exchange has been closed since the outbreak of war. Regulations under which the exchange will operate include the following:

Dealings, except for cash, will be prohibited; the present minimum price lists are to be maintained and extended to all transactions recorded; a broker at the time of selling securities must show that he possesses or controls them; no dealings in shares or bonds will be allowed unless approved by the treasury; no member will be allowed to bid for or offer stock openly in the market; no member will be permitted to negotiate the purchase or sale of shares dealt in on the American market at a price less than the English equivalent of the New York closing price of July 20. Only British-born or naturalized members or clerks will be admitted to the exchange.

GREAT BRITAIN AND
UNITED STATES WILL
CELEBRATE PEACE
CENTENARY TODAY

Original Plans For Series of Festivities Interrupted on Account of the Existing Conflict

TWO NATIONS ISSUE
STATEMENTS URGING
CONTINUOUS PEACE

Widely Prominent American Citizens Sign Communication Emphasizing Friendship Between United States and England

New York, December 23.—The people of the United States and Great Britain tomorrow will observe the one hundredth anniversary of the signing of the treaty of Ghent by reminding themselves that the day marks a century of peace among English-speaking nations.

The original plans called for a series of celebrations in this country and across the water. It was to have begun in Ghent on Christmas eve with a banquet tendered by the burgomaster to 50 representatives of the United States, 50 Englishmen and 50 Canadians in the hall where the treaty was signed. This plan is upset by the fact that the ancient Belgian city now is occupied by the Germans, with whom England is at war.

To mark the day the American and British committees which had been arranging for the peace centenary, issued communications for simultaneous publication Thursday morning in the newspapers in England and the United States.

British Statement

The British statement expresses the hope that the disarmed frontier between the United States and Canada may long continue as an example to the world of the safe defense of mutual respect and trust in the affairs of nations, and prays that "the peace between the British and American democracies, which has so long endured, may never be broken."

The British committee has purchased Sulgrave Manor, the ancestral home of George Washington in England, with a view to presenting to the American people but this feature of the celebration also has been postponed until after the war.

The American committee, notwithstanding the war, purpose to carry out in part its original intention of celebrating the peace centenary and in its communication issued over the signature of a number of widely known citizens, urges suitable commemoration of ratification of the treaty by the United States, which followed immediately upon the arrival of its draft on February 18, 1814. The dates specified are February 14, for exercises in churches of all denominations; February 17 and 18 for formal addresses at state capitals, and February 22 for exercises in the schools.

The American communication is as follows:

One hundred years ago today there was signed at Ghent in Flanders the treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States, which marked the close of a war of widely known dimensions. It was the last war between English-speaking peoples of the earth. Today the city of Ghent is at the very center of the terrible conflict that rages in Europe.

"The American peace centenary committee cannot permit this anniversary to pass without inviting the thoughtful attention of our fellow citizens to the contrast presented by the century-long period of peace which English-speaking peoples have enjoyed among themselves on the one hand and the appalling destruction of life, property and great monuments of civilization which the European war involves on the other. It had been our intention of the earth in their several international relations. It had been our earnest desire that the spirit of peaceful and friendly co-operation, which each of these peoples has manifested toward the people of the United States would also mark their dealings with one another. Unfortunately this was not to be and the war has been called upon to mark our centenary celebration in the midst of the most terrible and destructive war that history records.

Faith In Justice

"Even at such a time, we must avow once more our emphatic faith in the supremacy of justice over force, of law over might. We rejoice in the peaceful relations of 100 years among an English-speaking peoples, and particularly in the unbroken and unfortified line nearly 400 miles in length, which divides the territory of the United States from that of the Dominion of Canada. The mutual trust, forbearance and helpfulness which

(Continued on Page Seven)

PEACE ALONG MEXICAN
BORDER NOW PROBABLE

"Very Satisfactory," is the Way General Hugh L. Scott Characterizes Conference With Benjamin Hill, Carranza Defender of Naco—To Talk to Maytorena

Naco, Ariz., December 23.—Peace along the entire Mexican border is a possibility, as the result of conferences today and tonight between General Hugh L. Scott, United States chief of staff, and the two Mexican leaders of Sonora.

"Very satisfactory," was General Scott's opinion of his conferences with Benjamin Hill, Carranza defender of Naco, Sonora. He deemed the result favorable to the final solution of the border problem. The meeting lasted less

than an hour, and was held in the bullet damaged United States customs house, 50 feet north of the international boundary.

"Governor Maytorena, the besieger of the Mexican village, sent word that the Sonora law prohibiting him as governor from crossing the border without authority from the legislature prevented his coming to General Scott's tent. His agents suggested he come as military chief, but he did not consent. A third appointment with him has been made for tomorrow, on the border four miles east of here."